

VZCZCXYZ0018
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHTH #0208 0421650
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 111649Z FEB 10
FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1522
INFO RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS

UNCLAS ATHENS 000208

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ECON](#) [KIPR](#) [GR](#)
SUBJECT: Greece: AmCham Engages Government and Private Sector on IPR

¶1. (SBU) On January 26, the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce held a conference on "Intellectual Property: Rights, Protection, and Legal Framework." In addition to attracting a large audience of more than 100, the conference succeeded in showcasing a diversity of participants and speakers from both the public and private sectors. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Economy, Competitiveness, and Shipping, and Ministry of Finance were each represented on the panels, as well as in the audience, with the Finance and Customs officials comprising nearly an entire panel on "Measures and Recent Developments in Intellectual Property Law Enforcement."

¶2. (SBU) EconCouns participated in the panel on "Policy Toward the Infringement of Intellectual Property Rights, and Its Role in the International Economy," and spoke on the negative impact of IPR violations on innovation, productivity, and the economy. Underscoring the role that protection of intellectual property plays in promoting creativity and in attracting investment, EconCouns stressed that inadequate IPR protection contributes to job losses for citizens, income losses for companies, and revenue losses for governments.

¶3. (SBU) GoG speakers noted that the government is focused on improving its legislative framework; data collection; enforcement; coordination of law enforcement; training, and public-private collaboration. The development of new interagency efforts to combat the problem were mentioned, including new police training modules created jointly by the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. An overall emphasis was placed on the need for enhanced enforcement, especially within the judiciary, and public awareness campaigns.

4 (SBU) Comment: This conference comes on the heels of the first meeting of AmCham's new IPR Committee, comprising local industry representatives from the Business Software Alliance, Nike, Pfizer, and others, who are disappointed with the lack of GoG action on IPR since the development of the government's Action Plan in February ¶2009. The Hellenic Copyright Office has assured Post that significant steps have been taken in the last year, and a summary of GoG activities is expected from the MFA shortly, which will be reported septel.
Speckhard